

Attachment B: Community Resilience Centers (CRC) Round 1 Program Guidelines Memo

Background

On December 7, 2022, CRC staff released CRC Round 1 (R1) Draft Guidelines for a 45-day public comment window, during which time staff hosted 7 public Draft Guidelines workshops to review the draft, invite discussion and input, and build relationships. These workshops included one for a statewide audience, four organized by broad geographic regions to facilitate optional virtual networking, one for rural communities, and one for Tribal communities. Workshop attendees included representatives from community and recreation facilities, community-based organizations, direct service providers, local and regional government, nonprofit and policy advocates, State agencies, Tribal governments and Tribal-serving organizations, consultants, utilities and community choice aggregators, academic institutions and research organizations, and Federal partners.

CRC staff received more than 750 public comments from over 100 commenters on Draft Guidelines that provided SGC with critical insights, expertise, and recommendations. CRC staff also hosted focus groups and met with subject matter experts and interagency leads to ensure the CRC R1 Final Guidelines consider a range of policy areas and perspectives necessary for effective program design.

This document summarizes the main areas of feedback received during public workshops, public comment, subject matter expert and interagency discussions, and focus groups.

CRC Round 1 Program Guidelines – Summary of Changes

The tables below summarize feedback received during the public comment period from stakeholders and from additional discussions with subject matter experts, interagency staff, and focus groups. To determine changes to the Final Guidelines, staff reviewed all comments, researched key topics, and proposed new language to address the feedback received. Given the program intent and design, staff prioritized input from priority communities, priority populations, and entities facing more barriers to accessing a State infrastructure program where possible. Forthcoming program materials, including the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) and application materials and templates, will address additional questions and feedback. Staff are tracking and developing materials to further clarify and communicate application requirements, components, and deadlines to ensure robust continued outreach.

The sections are organized by topic according to the restructured CRC R1 Final Guidelines, complete with a high-level summary of feedback and the CRC team action proposed in Final Guidelines.

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Topic	Feedback	CRC Team Proposal for R1 Final Guidelines
Funding Amounts and Award Ranges	Proposed minimums for Planning and Implementation Grants are too high for smaller organizations.	Staff reduced minimums for two grant types: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planning Grants from \$200k minimum to \$100k minimum• Implementation Grants from \$5M minimum to \$1M minimum SGC retains the right to make partial awards.

SECTION 2: PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Topic	Feedback	CRC Team Proposal for R1 Final Guidelines
Grant Types and Readiness	Under-resourced communities and specific community-serving locations may require additional funds and support to build readiness and cover pre-development and basic infrastructure costs.	Staff added a new grant type: CRC Project Development Grants, each ranging \$500,000 to \$5,000,000 (\$9.6 million total). Project Development Grants will prioritize disadvantaged unincorporated, Tribal, and rural communities. If undersubscribed, SGC will reallocate funds to other CRC grant types. Staff modeled CRC Project Development Grants after Transformative Climate Communities Round 5 Project Development Grants.
Priority Community & Priority Populations	Commenters requested further clarity on eligible communities, priority community designations, and local community members to prioritize and serve.	Staff reiterated that all communities are eligible to apply. Staff defined priority communities, clarified the statewide focus on under-resourced communities per statute, and detailed additional points to priority communities in Scoring Criteria. To align with the California Priority Populations Task Force, staff shifted the term “Access & Functional Needs (AFN)” to “priority populations,” clarified that all proposals focus on priority populations at the neighborhood-scale, and reflected this language in Scoring Criteria.
Funding Target: Tribal Funding Target	Given the total anticipated number of R1 awards across grant types, Tribes requested an increase in the Tribal funding target.	Staff increased the CRC R1 Tribal funding target from at least two awards to at least five awards, across all CRC grant types.

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Funding Target: Statewide Geographic Diversity	Council provided high-level guidance to staff regarding statewide geographic diversity and encouraged staff to leverage existing regional definitions.	To ensure CRC meets the statutory requirement to prioritize projects that represent statewide geographic diversity, staff added a funding target of at least one CRC R1 award in each CalOES Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Region.

SECTION 5: IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS

Topic	Feedback	CRC Team Proposal for R1 Final Guidelines
Strategies: Energy Resilience	Comments requested further clarity on specific eligible energy resilience activities, especially allowable microgrids for R1.	R1 Guidelines specify that single-customer microgrids are eligible costs. Grantees must address energy resilience in their emergency plan.
Strategies: Workforce Development, Education and Training	Comments requested stronger and more consistent workforce-related language, including in activities and costs, partnerships, and scoring criteria.	To bolster inclusion of workforce development strategies in applications, staff added specific examples to the Workforce Development, Education, and Training Strategy and detailed points for specific labor and workforce measures in Scoring Criteria.
Project Requirements	Many comments expressed concern that the full list of required facility features and functions pose too high of a barrier for many community-serving facilities to meet by end of Implementation grant term. Comments also requested clarification of features needed to serve as heating, cooling, and clean air centers.	<p>R1 Guidelines maintain some facility requirements, while softening others and allowing partnerships with local organizations and facilities to meet certain requirements.</p> <p>For example: Applicants may now partner with other entities to provide overnight shelter, pet co-sheltering, food preparation and storage, laundry, showers, and portable restrooms. Partnerships should be secured by the end of the grant term.</p> <p>Guidelines specify that all facilities must have central heating and air, a minimum of MERV 13 air filtration, and drinking water stored on site with a plan to re-supply as needed.</p>
Project Requirements:	Rural communities expressed specific infrastructure and partnership challenges	R1 Guidelines allow rural communities to request

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Modifications for Rural Communities	as barriers to meeting proposed project requirements by end of grant term. For example: water storage and broadband installation and deployment in rural communities.	modifications to specific project requirements that present a hardship, in combination with a relevant and feasible alternative. These include: pet sheltering, showers, laundry, portable restrooms, broadband access, backup power generation and/or battery storage, and device charging capabilities.
Project Requirements: Hours of Operation	Many potential applicants demonstrated concern with the proposed requirement that CRCs remain open and staffed 24/7 during an emergency and advocated for specific hours of operation for specific emergencies and climate impacts. For example: stakeholders focused on extreme heat requested SGC identify temperature thresholds and minimum hours of service for extreme heat events.	<p>R1 Guidelines require CRCs to be able to open 7 days a week for emergency situations, but allow local communities to determine appropriate hours and conditions for CRC activation, given local capacity and range of climate impacts with different appropriate hours of service (e.g. extreme heat versus extreme cold and storms).</p> <p>Guidelines also note that day-to-day facility staff are not required to staff the CRC during emergency activations; CRC staffing during emergency activations can include other entities, such as American Red Cross or County staff.</p>
Project Requirements: Emergency Plans	Comments requested clarification on CRC emergency plan requirements and expressed concern about completing a draft plan by time of application submittal.	Staff clarified requirements at time of application versus by the end of the grant term, and added new components, including energy resilience for the facility, consistent attention to priority populations, and coordination with County emergency managers. Staff will provide an application template for the emergency plan to provide further guidance.
Project Requirements: County Coordination	Feedback and discussions with communities across the state reflected uneven county coordination and resources during emergencies. Comments emphasized a need for Grantees to collaborate with local government emergency response in order to ensure	R1 Guidelines note that CRC Applicants that do not include a County as a Lead or Co-Applicant must provide a Notice of Intent to Apply to their County by the application deadline. By the end of the grant term Grantees must

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	coordinated and effective activation during climate events. County coordination was also emphasized as a requirement for CRCs to seek reimbursement from State or Federal funding sources, and to receive liability coverage from the County.	produce a signed letter of commitment or memorandum of understanding/agreement with the County detailing procedures for CRC activation.
Long-Term Use Requirements	Many commenters named the 30 years of facility usage as a CRC as a significant barrier to apply. Lacking ongoing funding, commenters shared concerns about demonstrating an ability to continue delivery of services & programs post-grant term.	Staff reduced the required minimum number of years of facility usage as a CRC to 15 years and will award additional points to projects that can demonstrate an ability to exceed 15 years. R1 Guidelines now only require grantees to deliver services & programs through the end of the grant term. Awarded facilities must secure a deed restriction or similar mechanism during the grant term, and leased facilities must provide additional documentation to ensure the facility's continued usage as a CRC.
Program Evaluation	Feedback on this item emphasized a need to embed equity in the program evaluation by adding communications and reporting support to the third-party Evaluator's scope of work and ensuring appropriate budget for Grantees to dedicate to evaluation activities.	R1 Guidelines Program Evaluation section now includes communications and reporting support. Staff intend to release an RFI for program evaluation to invite input on the scope of work and necessary budget for development of an evaluation framework and evaluation of Round 1 grants.

SECTION 6: ELIGIBILITY

Topic	Feedback	CRC Team Proposal for R1 Final Guidelines
Eligible Applicants	Commenters expressed that private entities warrant additional safeguards and direction to ensure the awarded CRC could ensure local community input and public access.	Staff added additional requirements to the Guidelines for "Private Entities" that ensure coordination with community and continued public access.
Collaborative Stakeholder Structure	Many commenters expressed that the requirement to submit	R1 Guidelines now allow a draft PA or MOU at time of application, with a

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	a signed Partnership Agreement (PA) or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at time of application posed a barrier, especially for Tribes and local governments.	signed and executed PA or MOU due by the grant agreement stage.
Project Area	Many commenters advocated for a network approach with multiple CRC sites in a community under one application, given physical and sizing constraints of community facilities, existing models in communities, and local needs.	Given the statutory intent of the program, each awarded CRC site must meet the full range of functions to serve as a CRC. Therefore, Applicants may submit multiple sites within one application, provided all proposed facilities have the same owner and can meet all program thresholds and project requirements by end of term. Applicants whose proposals include multiple facilities must demonstrate coordination across networked sites and have one Collaborative Stakeholder Structure that governs the entire CRC grant, although services, programs, and partners may vary per site.

SECTION 7: GRANT ACTIVITIES

Topic	Feedback	CRC Team Proposal for R1 Final Guidelines
Cost Breakdowns	Commenters expressed concern about strict minimums and maximums for Implementation Grant eligible cost categories. Comments named the 65% minimum for Capital Projects as a barrier to limit projects under development. Given availability of non-CRC Capital Project funds, commenters requested flexibility from SGC in cost categories.	Staff balanced feedback received with the emphasis on capital infrastructure expressed in the program's enabling statute. R1 Guidelines now require a 51% minimum for Capital Projects. While the Guidelines maintain a 12% cap on indirect costs, the Guidelines provide flexibility on the percentage of the budget allocated for Community Resilience Services and Programs, community engagement, pre-development, and basic infrastructure.

SECTION 8: PROGRAM THRESHOLDS

Topic	Feedback	CRC Team Proposal for R1 Final Guidelines
Facility Assessments	Feedback identified that facility assessments were needed to identify upgrades required for retrofit projects to be safe, accessible, and usable over the long term.	The Guidelines now require all Implementation Grantees to complete a facility assessment prior to signing of the grant agreement. Applicants are encouraged to complete an assessment prior to the application deadline. Projects that complete a facility assessment after application and find that upgrades are needed will be required to reallocate budget from their award to cover costs of needed upgrades.

SECTION 9: APPLICATION

Topic	Feedback	CRC Team Proposal for R1 Final Guidelines
Application Process and Components	Commenters requested clarity on the templates that SGC will provide and the detail required in application answers. Commenters requested specific dates.	Staff provided additional detail on required components, identified upcoming application templates and sample language, and specified a proposed application window. Proposed dates are subject to change based on development of the application and review process.
Scoring Criteria: Climate Impacts and Data	Comments requested clarity on what climate impacts should be considered, how to assess or demonstrate impacts, and what to include in an application.	R1 Guidelines now include clearer guidance and instructions. All applicants should use the Cal-Adapt Local Climate Snapshot Tool to provide baseline data and add the best available local data that tells the story of needs and impacts at the neighborhood-scale. Staff will provide additional climate impacts and data resources for applicants by NOFA and application release.
Scoring Criteria	Commenters requested more granular scoring criteria, with specific point allocations for subsections. Comments centered around prioritizing readiness and feasibility of projects, strength of multi-sector partnerships, and incentives for workforce and labor measures. Comments also requested clarity on points awarded to priority communities and priority populations.	Staff built out the scoring criteria to include detailed descriptions for each section, with points awarded for specific components within each scoring category. Staff also updated the language to clarify scoring for program objectives, workforce, priority populations, and readiness.

SECTION 10: GRANT ADMINISTRATION

Topic	Feedback	CRC Team Proposal for R1 Final Guidelines
Reporting Requirements	Comments expressed concern about the quantity of reporting requirements expected of grantees.	Staff lightened and shifted reporting requirements. For example: shifted updates from written reports into grantee check-ins.
Prevailing Wage Requirements	Comments requested clarity on prevailing wage requirements for the CRC program across grant types.	R1 Guidelines clarify that prevailing wage law requirements only apply to Capital Projects. Staff will clarify this requirement in costing templates for applicants and have flagged this topic for grantee orientation and onboarding.

SECTION 12: APPENDICES

Topic	Feedback	CRC Team Proposal for R1 Final Guidelines
Glossary and Key Terms	Comments encouraged additional definitions for key terms and references.	Staff researched existing definitions in State code and other key resources and added new definitions for relevant concepts and terms.
Examples of Eligible Activities	Comments proposed additional eligible activities relevant for priority populations, especially people with disabilities, language access needs, and other needs.	Staff added recommended examples from public comment, subject matter experts, and interagency partners to provide a broader array of example activities grantees can include in proposals. Staff will provide additional examples, case studies, and resources for potential applicants to consider during application development.